

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
George C. Marshall Space Flight Center
Marshall Space Flight Center, AL 35812



September 29, 2009

Reply to Attn: LS01 (AMM)

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

FROM: LS01/James R. Frees

SUBJECT: Approval for MSFC Employees with Senior Institutional or Project Responsibilities to attend the 21st Annual Dr. Wernher von Braun Memorial Dinner

In accordance with 5 C.F.R. 2635.204(g)(2) and (3), I make the following determination:

Certain MSFC employees with senior institutional or project responsibilities have been invited to attend the 21st Annual Dr. Wernher von Braun Memorial Dinner sponsored by The National Space Club (NSC), scheduled for Wednesday, October 21, 2009, at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center Davidson Center for Space Exploration.

NSC was founded on October 4, 1957, to stimulate the exchange of ideas and information about rocketry and astronautics and to promote recognition of U.S. achievements in space. The NSC is a non-profit corporation comprised of representatives from industry, government, educational institutions, and private individuals.

This event will be a widely-attended gathering of aerospace industry representatives and local elected officials, as well as other community leaders. Besides 160 MSFC employees, Federal officials invited include employees of the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command, the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command, U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command, and the Missile Defense Agency. The event is valued at \$75.00 per person and approximately 850 individuals have been invited to attend. I find that the event meets the requirements of a "widely attended gathering" as defined in 5 CFR §2635.204(g)(2).

Most of NSC's members are companies that are currently providing contractual services to NASA, or will seek to provide contractual services to NASA in the future.¹ Some MSFC personnel invited to attend this event presently, or may in the near future, have extensive involvement in matter relating to members of NSC in their pursuit to provide, or seek to provide,

¹ See file for listing of NSC corporate membership.

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contractual services to NASA.² These personnel are similarly situated in that they each have senior institutional or project responsibilities that could significantly influence current or future contracts for a majority of the NSC's corporate members. Alternatively, they may have duties that could significantly affect the interests of the NSC itself.

I have determined that free attendance of these senior institutional and project leaders at the event is in the interests of the agency because it will further agency programs and operations. The attendance of these senior NASA employees at the event will help to raise NASA's profile with state and local business and governmental leaders, will contribute to community relations, and will support NASA's statutory mandate to disseminate information about its programs.

Given the purpose of the event, NASA's interest in it, the broad attendance anticipated, and the reasonable market value of the event, I have determined that the value to the agency in having these senior institutional and project leaders attend this event outweighs any concern that free attendance may or may appear to improperly influence them in the performance of their duties.

Accordingly, NASA employees in the positions identified above may accept free attendance at the event. They may also accept invitations for accompanying spouses or guests.

The National Space Club is not a lobbying organization and is not registered as such under the Lobbying Disclosure Act.

Questions about this determination may be addressed to Annette Metcalf Coffel at 256-544-0025.


James R. Frees
Acting Chief Counsel

² Center Director; Deputy Center Director; Associate Center Director; Director, Office of Procurement; Deputy Director, Office of Procurement; Supervisor, External Relations Office; Specialist, Office of Government & Community Relations. Chief Counsel; Deputy Chief Counsel; Assistant Chief Counsel for Contracts; Chief Financial Officer; Deputy Chief Financial Officer; Director, Office of Strategic Analysis & Communications.